Application No.: 09/476,877   Docket No.: 21736-00010-US

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 53-86 are cancelled.

Claim 87 (new)   A computer-implemented system for auctioning a plurality of items, at least some of said items being dissimilar, said system comprising:

a)   an auctioneer's system and at least two user systems, the auctioneer's system communicatively coupled to user systems;

b)   said user systems including:

b1)   means for receiving messages from the auctioneer's system and for displaying those messages;

b2)   means for receiving bid related information from users; and

b3)   means for transmitting bid information to the auctioneer's system, said bid information including bids (S_i, P_i) each comprising a set identification S_i and a value parameter P_i, where the set identification S_i identifies a set of items that the user proposes to transact and where the value parameter P_i specifies a value proposed by the user for the set of items identified by S_i; and

c)   said auctioneer's system including:

c1)   means for generating and transmitting messages to user systems, said messages including a non-final message indicating that an auction will continue and a final message indicating that an auction has terminated;

c2)   means for receiving bid information from user systems; and

c3)   decision means responsive to the bid information received from the user systems for determining whether an auction should continue or terminate, said decision means including:

c31)   selecting means which selects bids to maximize a function of the value parameters P_i of the selected bids;

2

Application No.: 09/476,877   Docket No.: 21736-00010-US

c32)   means to initiate the generation of a non-final message to at least one user system in response to a determination to continue an auction; and

c33)   means to initiate the generation of a final message to at least one user system in response to a determination to terminate an auction.

Claim 88 (new)   A system as recited in claim 87 wherein the selecting means constrains the selection such that the sets S_i identified by the selected bids are disjoint.

Claim 89 (new)   A system as recited in claim 88 wherein the items comprise television licenses or associated derivative rights.

Claim 90 (new)   A system as recited in claim 88 wherein the auction is conducted in multiple rounds.

Claim 91 (new)   A system as recited in claim 90 wherein the decision means compares the sum of the parameters P_i from the selected bids to a function of the sum of the parameters P_i from the selected bids of an earlier round.

Claim 92 (new)   A system as recited in claim 88 which further includes means for limiting bids from a particular user based on previous bidding activity by said particular user.

Claim 93 (new)   A system as recited in claim 88 which further includes means for limiting the number of bids that may be entered by a particular user.

Claim 94 (new)   A system as recited in claim 88 which further includes means for limiting bids to identifying particular sets of said plurality of items.

3

Application No.: 09/476,877   Docket No.: 21736-00010-US

Claim 95 (new)   A system as recited in claim 88 which further includes means for limiting a bid from a particular user to a value parameter no less than a minimum value, wherein said minimum value is specific to said particular user and to a particular set identified, and depends on previous bids by the users.

Claim 96 (new)   A system as recited in claim 88 which further includes means for limiting a bid from a particular user to a value parameter no greater than a maximum value, wherein said maximum value is specific to said particular user and to a particular set identified, and depends on previous bids by the users.

Claim 97 (new)   A computer-implemented system for auctioning dissimilar items, including multiple instances of each of plural dissimilar items, said system comprising:

a)   an auctioneer's system and at least two user systems, the auctioneer's system communicatively coupled to user systems;

b)   said user systems including:

b1)   means for receiving messages from the auctioneer's system and for displaying those messages;

b2)   means for receiving bid related information from users; and

b3)   means for transmitting bid information to the auctioneer's system, said bid information including bids (S_i, P_i) each comprising a set identification S_i and a value parameter P_i, where the set identification S_i identifies a set of items that the user proposes to transact and where the value parameter P_i specifies a value proposed by the user for the set of items identified by S_i; and

c)   said auctioneer's system including:

4

Application No.: 09/476,877   Docket No.: 21736-00010-US

    c1)   means for generating and transmitting messages to user systems, said messages including a non-final message indicating that an auction will continue and a final message indicating that an auction has terminated;

    c2)   means for receiving bid information from user systems; and

    c3)   decision means responsive to the bid information received from the user systems for determining whether an auction should continue or terminate, said decision means. including:

    c31)   selecting means which selects bids to maximize a function of the value parameters P_i of the selected bids subject to the constraint that the sets S_i identified by the selected bids are compatible;

    c32)   means to initiate the generation of a non-final message to at least one user system in response to a determination to continue an auction; and

    c33)   means to initiate the generation of a final message to at least one user system in response to a determination to terminate an auction.

Claim 98 (new)   A system as recited in claim 97 wherein the items comprise television licenses or associated derivative rights.

Claim 99 (new)   A system as recited in claim 97 wherein the auction is conducted in multiple rounds.

Claim 100 (new)   A system as recited in claim 99 wherein the sets S_i identified by the selected bids in the final round of the auction indicate items that will be assigned to the respective users after the auction.

5

Application No.: 09/476,877   Docket No.: 21736-00010-US

Claim 101 (new)   A system as recited in claim 99 wherein the decision means compares the sum of the parameters P_i from the selected bids to a function of the sum of the parameters P_i from the selected bids of an earlier round.

Claim 102 (new)   A system as recited in claim 97 which further includes means for limiting bids from a particular user based on previous bidding activity by said particular user.

Claim 103 (new)   A system as recited in claim 97 which further includes means for limiting the number of bids that may be entered by a particular user.

Claim 104 (new)   A system as recited in claim 97 which further includes means for limiting bids to identifying particular sets of said plurality of items.

Claim 105 (new)   A system as recited in claim 97 which further includes means for limiting a bid from a particular user to a value parameter no less than a minimum value, wherein said minimum value is specific to said particular user and to a particular set identified, and depends on previous bids by the users.

Claim 106 (new)   A system as recited in claim 97 which further includes means for limiting a bid from a particular user to a value parameter no greater than a maximum value, wherein said maximum value is specific to said particular user and to a particular set identified, and depends on previous bids by the users.

Claim 107 (new)   A computer-implemented method for auctioning a plurality of items, at least some of said items being dissimilar, among a plurality of users comprising:

    a)   providing an auctioneer's system;

6

Application No.: 09/476,877   Docket No.: 21736-00010-US

    b)   receiving bid related information from users and transmitting bid information to the auctioneer's system, said bid information including bids (S_i, P_i) each comprising a set identification S_i and a value parameter P_i, where the set identification S_i identifies a set of items that the user proposes to transact and where the value parameter P_i specifies a value proposed by the user for the set of items identified by S_i;

    c)   determining at the auctioneer's system, in response to the bid information received from users, whether the auction should continue or terminate, said determining including the selecting of bids to maximize a function of the value parameters P_i of the selected bids;

    d)   transmitting a message indicating that the auction will continue to at least one user, in response to a determination to continue the auction; and

    e)   transmitting a message indicating that the auction will terminate to at least one user, in response to a determination to terminate the auction.

Claim 108 (new)   A method as recited in claim 107 wherein the determining further includes constraining the selection such that the sets S_i identified by the selected bids are disjoint.

Claim 109 (new)   A method as recited in claim 108 wherein the items comprise television licenses or associated derivative rights.

Claim 110 (new)   A method as recited in claim 108 wherein the auction is conducted in multiple rounds.

7

Application No.: 09/476,877   Docket No.: 21736-00010-US

Claim 111 (new)   A method as recited in claim 110 wherein the determining further includes comparing the sum of the parameters P_i from the selected bids to a function of the sum of the parameters P_i from the selected bids of an earlier round.

Claim 112 (new)   A method as recited in claim 108 which further comprises limiting bids from a particular user based on previous bidding activity by said particular user.

Claim 113 (new)   A method as recited in claim 108 which further comprises limiting the number of bids that may be entered by a particular user.

Claim 114 (new)   A method as recited in claim 108 which further comprises limiting bids to identifying particular sets of said plurality of items.

Claim 115 (new)   A method as recited in claim 108 which further comprises limiting a bid from a particular user to a value parameter no less than a minimum value, wherein said minimum value is specific to said particular user and to a particular set identified, and depends on previous bids by the users.

Claim 116 (new)   A method as recited in claim 108 which further comprises limiting a bid from a particular user to a value parameter no greater than a maximum value, wherein said maximum value is specific to said particular user and to a particular set identified, and depends on previous bids by the users.

Claim 117 (new)   A computer-implemented method for auctioning a plurality of items, at least some of said items being dissimilar, among a plurality of users comprising:

a)   providing an auctioneer's system;

8

Application No.: 09/476,877   Docket No.: 21736-00010-US

b)   receiving bid related information from users and transmitting bid information to the auctioneer's system, said bid information including bids (S_i, P_i) each comprising a set identification S_i and a value parameter P_i, where the set identification S_i identifies a set of items that the user proposes to transact and where the value parameter P_i specifies a value proposed by the user for the set of items identified by S_i;

c)   determining at the auctioneer's system, in response to the bid information received from users, whether the auction should continue or terminate, said determining including the selecting of bids to maximize a function of the value parameters P_i of the selected bids subject to the constraint that the sets S_i identified by the selected bids are compatible;

d)   transmitting a message indicating that the auction will continue to at least one user, in response to a determination to continue the auction; and

e)   transmitting a message indicating that the auction will terminate to at least one user, in response to a determination to terminate the auction.

Claim 118 (new)   A method as recited in claim 117 wherein the items comprise television licenses or associated derivative rights.

Claim 119 (new)   A method as recited in claim 117 wherein the auction is conducted in multiple rounds.

Claim 120 (new)   A method as recited in claim 119 wherein the sets S_i identified by the selected bids in the final round of the auction indicate items that will be assigned to the respective users after the auction.

9

Application No.: 09/476,877   Docket No.: 21736-00010-US

Claim 121 (new)   A method as recited in claim 119 wherein the determining further includes comparing the sum of the parameters P_i from the selected bids to a function of the sum of the parameters P_i from the selected bids of an earlier round.

Claim 122 (new)   A method as recited in claim 117 which further comprises limiting bids from a particular user based on previous bidding activity by said particular user.

Claim 123 (new)   A method as recited in claim 117 which further comprises limiting the number of bids that may be entered by a particular user.

Claim 124 (new)   A method as recited in claim 117 which further comprises limiting bids to identifying particular sets of said plurality of items.

D1

Claim 125 (new)   A method as recited in claim 117 which further comprises limiting a bid from a particular user to a value parameter no less than a minimum value, wherein said minimum value is specific to said particular user and to a particular set identified, and depends on previous bids by the users.

Claim 126 (new)   A method as recited in claim 117 which further comprises limiting a bid from a particular user to a value parameter no greater than a maximum value, wherein said maximum value is specific to said particular user and to a particular set identified, and depends on previous bids by the users.

Claim 127 (new)   A system for conducting a computer-implemented auction of a plurality of items, at least some of said items being dissimilar, said system including a plurality

10

Application No.: 09/476,877 Docket No.: 21736-00010-US

of user systems operated by users and an auctioneer's system, the auctioneer's system being communicatively coupled to a plurality of user systems, comprising:

a) means for receiving bid information, said bid information including bids (S_i, P_i) each comprising a set identification S_i and a value parameter P_i, where the set identification S_i identifies a set of items that the user proposes to transact and where the value parameter P_i specifies a value proposed by the user for the set of items identified by S_i, from users at a plurality of user systems;

b) means for transmitting signals based on the bid information from user systems to the auctioneer's system; and

c) means for determining, based on the signals, the items to be assigned to the users, said determining means including selecting means which selects bids to maximize a function of the value parameters P_i of the selected bids.

Claim 128 (new) A system as recited in claim 127 wherein the selecting means constrains the selection such that the sets S_i identified by the selected bids are disjoint.

Claim 129 (new) A system as recited in claim 128 wherein the items comprise television licenses or associated derivative rights.

Claim 130 (new) A system as recited in claim 128 wherein the auction is conducted in multiple rounds.

Claim 131 (new) A system as recited in claim 130 wherein the determining means compares the sum of the parameters P_i from the selected bids to a function of the sum of the parameters P_i from the selected bids of an earlier round.

11

Application No.: 09/476,877 Docket No.: 21736-00010-US

Claim 132 (new)   A system as recited in claim 128 which further includes means for limiting bids from a particular user based on previous bidding activity by said particular user.

Claim 133 (new)   A system as recited in claim 128 which further includes means for limiting the number of bids that may be entered by a particular user.

Claim 134 (new)   A system as recited in claim 128 which further includes means for limiting bids to identifying particular sets of said plurality of items.

Claim 135 (new)   A system as recited in claim 128 which further includes means for limiting a bid from a particular user to a value parameter no less than a minimum value, wherein said minimum value is specific to said particular user and to a particular set identified, and depends on previous bids by the users.

Claim 136 (new)   A system as recited in claim 128 which further includes means for limiting a bid from a particular user to a value parameter no greater than a maximum value, wherein said maximum value is specific to said particular user and to a particular set identified, and depends on previous bids by the users.

Claim 137 (new)   A system for conducting a computer-implemented auction of dissimilar items, including multiple instances of each of plural dissimilar items, said system including a plurality of user systems operated by users and an auctioneer's system, the auctioneer's system being communicatively coupled to a plurality of user systems, comprising:

a)   means for receiving bid information, said bid information including bids (S_i, P_i) each comprising a set identification S_i and a value parameter P_i, where the set identification S_i identifies a set of items that the user proposes to transact and where the value parameter P_i

12

Application No.: 09/476,877   Docket No.: 21736-00010-US

specifies a value proposed by the user for the set of items identified by S_i, from users at a

plurality of user systems;

b)   means for transmitting signals based on the bid information from user systems to

the auctioneer's system; and

c)   means for determining, based on the signals, the items to be assigned to the users,

said determining means including selecting means which selects bids to maximize a function of

the value parameters P_i of the selected bids subject to the constraint that the sets S_i identified by

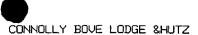the selected bids are compatible.

Claim 138 (new)   A system as recited in claim 137 wherein the items comprise

television licenses or associated derivative rights.

Claim 139 (new)   A system as recited in claim 137 wherein the auction is conducted

in multiple rounds.

Claim 140 (new)   A system as recited in claim 139 wherein the sets S_i identified by

the selected bids in the final round of the auction indicate items that will be assigned to the

respective users after the auction.

Claim 141 (new)   A system as recited in claim 139 wherein the determining means

compares the sum of the parameters P_i from the selected bids to a function of the sum of the

parameters P_i from the selected bids of an earlier round.

Claim 142 (new)   A system as recited in claim 137 which further includes means for

limiting bids from a particular user based on previous bidding activity by said particular user.

13

Application No.: 09/476,877   Docket No.: 21736-00010-US

Claim 143 (new)   A system as recited in claim 137 which further includes means for limiting the number of bids that may be entered by a particular user.

Claim 144 (new)   A system as recited in claim 137 which further includes means for limiting bids to identifying particular sets of said plurality of items.

Claim 145 (new)   A system as recited in claim 137 which further includes means for limiting a bid from a particular user to a value parameter no less than a minimum value, wherein said minimum value is specific to said particular user and to a particular set identified, and depends on previous bids by the users.

Claim 146 (new)   A system as recited in claim 137 which further includes means for limiting a bid from a particular user to a value parameter no greater than a maximum value, wherein said maximum value is specific to said particular user and to a particular set identified, and depends on previous bids by the users.

Claim 147 (new)   A method for conducting a computer-implemented auction of a plurality of items, at least some of said items being dissimilar, in a system including an auctioneer's system, the method comprising:

a)   receiving bid information from users, said bid information including bids (S_i, P_i) each comprising a set identification S_i and a value parameter P_i, where the set identification S_i identifies a set of items that the user proposes to transact and where the value parameter P_i specifies a value proposed by the user for the set of items identified by S_i;

b)   transmitting signals based on the bid information to the auctioneer's system; and

14

Application No.: 09/476,877   Docket No.: 21736-00010-US

c)   determining, based on the signals, the items to be assigned to the users, said determining including the selecting of bids to maximize a function of the value parameters P_i of the selected bids.

Claim 148 (new)   A method as recited in claim 147 wherein the determining further includes constraining the selection such that the sets S_i identified by the selected bids are disjoint.

Claim 149 (new)   A method as recited in claim 148 wherein the items comprise television licenses or associated derivative rights.
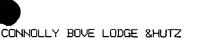
Claim 150 (new)   A method as recited in claim 148 wherein the auction is conducted in multiple rounds.

Claim 151 (new)   A method as recited in claim 150 wherein the determining further includes comparing the sum of the parameters P_i from the selected bids to a function of the sum of the parameters P_i from the selected bids of an earlier round.

Claim 152 (new)   A method as recited in claim 148 which further comprises limiting bids from a particular user based on previous bidding activity by said particular user.

Claim 153 (new)   A method as recited in claim 148 which further comprises limiting the number of bids that may be entered by a particular user.

Claim 154 (new)   A method as recited in claim 148 which further comprises limiting bids to identifying particular sets of said plurality of items.

15

Application No.: 09/476,877   Docket No.: 21736-00010-US

Claim 155 (new)   A method as recited in claim 148 which further comprises limiting a bid from a particular user to a value parameter no less than a minimum value, wherein said minimum value is specific to said particular user and to a particular set identified, and depends on previous bids by the users.

Claim 156 (new)   A method as recited in claim 148 which further comprises limiting a bid from a particular user to a value parameter no greater than a maximum value, wherein said maximum value is specific to said particular user and to a particular set identified, and depends on previous bids by the users.

Claim 157 (new)   A method for conducting a computer-implemented auction of dissimilar items, including multiple instances of each of plural dissimilar items, in a system including an auctioneer's system, the method comprising:

a)   receiving bid information from users, said bid information including bids (S_i, P_i) each comprising a set identification S_i and a value parameter P_i, where the set identification S_i identifies a set of items that the user proposes to transact and where the value parameter P_i specifies a value proposed by the user for the set of items identified by S_i;

b)   transmitting signals based on the bid information to the auctioneer's system; and

c)   determining, based on the signals, the items to be assigned to the users, said determining including the selecting of bids to maximize a function of the value parameters P_i of the selected bids subject to the constraint that the sets S_i identified by the selected bids are compatible.

Claim 158 (new)   A method as recited in claim 157 wherein the items comprise television licenses or associated derivative rights.

16

Application No.: 09/476,877   Docket No.: 21736-00010-US

Claim 159 (new)   A method as recited in claim 157 wherein the auction is conducted in multiple rounds.

Claim 160 (new)   A method as recited in claim 159 wherein the sets S_i identified by the selected bids in the final round of the auction indicate items that will be assigned to the respective users after the auction.

Claim 161 (new)   A method as recited in claim 159 wherein the determining further includes comparing the sum of the parameters P_i from the selected bids to a function of the sum of the parameters P_i from the selected bids of an earlier round.

Claim 162 (new)   A method as recited in claim 157 which further comprises limiting bids from a particular user based on previous bidding activity by said particular user.

Claim 163 (new)   A method as recited in claim 157 which further comprises limiting the number of bids that may be entered by a particular user.

Claim 164 (new)   A method as recited in claim 157 which further comprises limiting bids to identifying particular sets of said plurality of items.

Claim 165 (new)   A method as recited in claim 157 which further comprises limiting a bid from a particular user to a value parameter no less than a minimum value, wherein said minimum value is specific to said particular user and to a particular set identified, and depends on previous bids by the users.

17

Application No.: 09/476,877   Docket No.: 21736-00010-US

Claim 166 (new)   A method as recited in claim 157 which further comprises limiting a bid from a particular user to a value parameter no greater than a maximum value, wherein said maximum value is specific to said particular user and to a particular set identified, and depends on previous bids by the users.

18